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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

25X1A

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 9 February 1978

SUBJECT National Front Disagreement
25X1A on Election Date

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. The date for the coming elections was discussed by the National Front in a stormy session on 5 February 1978.
2. The Communists, who had previously favored 2 May, proposed that, since President Benes wants the constitution completed before the elections are held, the date should be put off until 23 May. The Social Democrats agreed. The National Socialists and the People's Party flared up at this proposal, and declared that, if the political parties of Czechoslovakia really wanted the constitution to be completed, an agreement on it could be reached in two weeks.
3. The People's Party delegates went on to demand that the police system, the radio and the press be cleaned up prior to the elections. The National Socialists supported the People's Party in this demand, and pointed out that secret police, agents provocateurs and Gestapo-like techniques are being used to break up the meetings of the moderate parties. The National Socialists further proposed that a Ministerial investigating commission be set up to report to the Government on such reforms in policy as are made. Although the Social Democrats indicated a willingness to back this idea, the Communists turned it down flatly. Accordingly, a proposal for the formation of such a commission will be made at the regular meeting of the Czechoslovak Cabinet, where a vote on the idea will be taken.
4. So far, no agreement on the election date has been reached. The only progress to date has been a decision to set up a narrowed National Front composed of the chairman and one member from each political party, who will discuss all difficulties holding up the completion of the constitution.

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